Inferentialism and the Reception of Testimony

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the connection between inferentialist philosophy and inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony. In contemporary epistemology there is a debate between inferentialists and anti-inferentialists; inferentialists argue that the adoption of a testimonial belief is the result of an inferential process in which the premises include beliefs about the testifier's trustworthiness. This paper defends the view that if assertions are testimonies, the best candidate for a theory of assertion is a normative theory, particularly a theory held by inferentialist philosophers in which assertions come with certain commitments. A Brandomian inferentialist need not be an inferentialist in the epistemology of testimony, who has a skeptical attitude and who searches for inferential justification for the testifier's competence or sincerity in order to believe what the speaker claims. However, this paper argues that the normative attitude emphasized by Robert Brandom and Jaroslav Peregrin and the evaluative attitude towards the testifier are related. By utilizing Gottlob Frege's and W.V. Quine's semantic views, it elaborates the idea that the adoption of a testimonial belief involves the recipient's seeing the testifier as a certain kind of person; still, the evaluative attitude towards the testifier need not generate an explicit premise into the inferential chain.

1. Introduction: the Two Inferentialisms

Inferentialism has various forms in contemporary philosophy. This paper discusses the inferentialist philosophy of language, or inferentialism *as* philosophy, and inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony. The relations between theories of assertion and epistemology of testimony have been studied a great deal, but the connection between the two inferentialisms have been less in focus. A inferentialist philosopher of language like Robert B. Brandom and Jaroslav Peregrin holds the view that the meaning of a word consist in its inferential role and that language is normative in the sense that its vocabulary is governed by inferential rules.[1] A normative inferentialist emphasizes the irreducibility of normative attitude; that attitude is the core of the game of giving and asking for reasons, and it amounts to treating our own and others' utterances as correct or incorrect (Brandom 1994, 37). The vocabulary used in Brandomian inferentialism is ethical - one could also call it juridical - prime examples being the words “commitment,” “entitlement,” “responsibility,” and “authority.” Peregrin also notes that normative attitudes toward our own and others' utterances cannot be *generall*y propositional attitudes, although they may be propositional (Peregrin 2014, 78). Besides searching for meanings in the chains of inferences, a normative inferentialist is interested in the items that give or that are given justification in those chains, that is, in judgments and their linguistic counterparts, namely, assertions. Therefore, the normativity that is the inferentialist's concern extends beyond the normativity of meaning. It could also be called epistemic normativity. Apart from seeking to understand propositions and to judge their semantic correctness, one who has a normative attitude searches for justifications for propositions; in fact, for a normative inferentialist the two goals are linked together.

In contemporary epistemology there is a debate between inferentialists and anti-inferentialists. Some philosophers, e.g., Elizabeth Fricker, argue that the adoption of a testimonial belief is the result of an inferential process in which the premises include beliefs about the testifier's trustworthiness. Others, e.g., C.A.J. Coady, claim that we adopt testimonial beliefs directly without making any such inferences. The former view is called inferentialism, while the latter is labeled as anti-inferentialism.[2] An interesting link between Brandom's inferentialism and epistemology of testimony is formed by Brandom's theory of assertion. On that account, assertions are sayings that are accompanied by certain commitments, such as the commitment to justify the assertion if it is seriously challenged. The present paper begins with a defense of the view that if assertions are testimonies and if we wish to explain the phenomena of buck-passing and blame, we need a normative theory of assertion, as Sanford C. Goldberg has argued, or preferably, a theory of assertion held by inferentialist philosophers in which assertions come with certain commitments. It then studies Gottlob Frege's and W.V. Quine's semantic views and seeks to make explicit some of their ideas that might help us to find a balanced view between inferentialism and anti-inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony.

If understanding an expression involves knowing its role in inferences, that also holds for testimonies; for an inferentialist, our testimonial beliefs are not direct in the sense that we would adopt them as detached from inferential chains. However, that is not yet to say that beliefs based on testimony would need to be tied to beliefs about the testifier's competence or epistemic and other virtues. A Brandomian inferentialist need not be an inferentialist in the epistemology of testimony, who has a skeptical attitude and who thus searches for inferential justification for the testifier's competence or sincerity in order to be licensed to believe what the speaker claims. However, besides arguing for the theory of assertion proposed by inferentialism, this paper seeks to show that the normative attitude emphasized by Brandom and Peregrin and the evaluative attitude toward the testifier are related. This paper utilizes Gottlob Frege's and W.V. Quine's views on our ways of seeing objects and persons and elaborates the idea that the adoption of a testimonial belief involves the recipient's seeing the testifier as a certain kind of person; still, the evaluative attitude toward the testifier need not generate an explicit premise into the inferential chain. This conclusion is related to how Peregrin understands the normative attitude. Some comments are also made on Miranda Fricker's views on the evaluative attitude toward the testifier.

2. Theories of Assertion and Testimonial Knowledge

Gottlob Frege distinguished between the thought (*der Gedanke*), the judgment (*das Urteil*), which is the acknowledgment of the truth of the thought, and the assertion (*die Behauptung*), which is the linguistic expression of the judgment.[3] In his posthumous paper ”Meine grundlegenden logischen Einsichten” (1915) he wrote that in language assertoric force is tied to the predicate (NS, 272). Frege was certainly not the only philosopher who adopted that distinction. It has been a commonplace in the analytic tradition that the distinction between a proposition and asserting the proposition catches something important and that it is one of philosophers' tasks to find out what makes the difference between the two. Theories of assertion are meant to explain the phenomena of language, such as why it is not correct to say: "p but I do not know that p." We are to blame if we assert that p, even if we lack what is required for knowing that p. One exception is Herman Cappelen's view; Cappelen rejects the idea that it is theoretically useful to single out a subset of sayings as assertions. He argues that what philosophers have tried to capture by the term "assertion" is "largely a philosophers' invention" and it is not a useful category if we wish to explain our linguistic practice (Cappelen 2011, 21) On his view, there are sayings and sayings are governed by variable norms, but those norms are not essential to the act of saying. Cappelen argues that sayings are evaluated by non-constitutive norms, which vary over time and across contexts and cultures, even across possible worlds (*ibid*., 22).

I will not raise any detailed arguments against Cappelen's criticism in this paper. However, one comment is in order. What is a problem in Cappelen's attack against theories of assertion is that it ignores the original motivation for the very distinction between the thought, the judgment, and the assertion. He does not take into account that it was introduced because philosophers, such as Frege, realized that it is one thing to say something, namely, to utter a proposition, and another thing to say something with assertoric force. Moreover, Cappelen does not seem to pay much attention to the fact that in everyday linguistic practice what philosophers call assertions, are primary to merely expressions of thoughts. It is one thing to tell out loud what one in thinking or to suggest a thought for consideration, and another thing to make a claim for truth. Language users are interested in the difference and they normally recognize it; Frege, among others, made that distinction visible by introducing a conceptual distinction that catches the difference. There was a moral motivation for making the distinction. We are responsible for our actions, including our assertings, but the mere expressing of thoughts does not bring us similar responsibility. However, Cappelen is right in that what is demanded from a speaker cannot be captured by any single norm, which would reveal the *essence* of assertion.

It is sensible philosophical activity to propose, if not theories, at least accounts, of assertion. The word "theory" is often used precisely for the reason already mentioned that like theories in general, most accounts of assertion seek to explain phenomena of language. John MacFarlane has identified four main accounts of assertion, which Sanford Goldberg calls the attitudinal account, the common ground account, the commitment account, and the constitutive rule account (MacFarlane 2011, 80; Goldberg 2015, 9 – 10). The commitment account, which is represented by Brandom and MacFarlane, and the constitutive rule account, are both normative. However, they are normative in different ways; as MacFarlane points out, while constitutive rule account looks at norms for making assertions, the commitment account looks at normative effects of making assertions (MacFarlane 2011, 91). The norms that constitutive rule accounts propose vary from belief norms to knowledge norms; for example, assertions may be regarded as sayings that are governed by the following norm: "Assert p only if you know that p." On the commitment account, assertions are sayings that are accompanied by certain commitments, such as the commitment to give reasons when challenged.[4]

Sanford Goldberg and Jennifer Lackey both suggest that normative theories are useful if we think of assertions as testimonies. Goldberg argues that if an asserter is a testifier, it does not suffice to require that what she asserts is something that she only believes. Nor does he regard it as sufficient to require that what is asserted just happens to be true. What is needed on his view is either knowledge, or if that is too strong a requirement, a justified or warranted belief.[5] Goldberg's thesis is that if a speech act is a case of testimony, it is an assertion and governed by an epistemic norm, and this also explains the phenomena of epistemic buck-passing and blame.

This is how he characterizes the case of buck-passing:

> Suppose that hearer H accepts speaker S's testimony that p, under conditions in which H had the epistemic right to accept that testimony; that some individual T later queries H regarding the truth of H's testimony-based belief that p; that, in response, H exhausts all of her reasons for regarding S's testimony trustworthy; and that even so T remains unsatisfied. In this situation H is epistemically entitled – is within her epistemic rights – to pass the epistemic buck on to S (by representing S as having more in the way of epistemic support for the truth of p). (Goldberg 2011, p. 178.)

Goldberg's characterization of the case of blame is the following:

> Suppose that H accepts speaker S's testimony that p, under conditions in which H had the epistemic right to accept that testimony; and that it turns out that S's testimony to this effect had insufficient epistemic support. In this situation H is entitled – is within her epistemic rights – to blame S for the insufficient epistemic support of her (H's) own belief. (*Ibid*.)

Goldberg stresses that it is not only the case that he as a philosopher is making claims about what testifying is. He also argues that it is *common knowledge* that this is how testifying works. In other words, he claims that it is common knowledge that a speech act that constitutes testimony must satisfy a norm that is at least as strong as that governing assertion. He also argues that this knowledge is implicit, it is in our practices (Goldberg 2011, 184). However, it seems that the commitment account is as able to explain the two phenomena as any other normative theory; in fact, Goldberg also refers approvingly to Brandom's early article on "Asserting," even if he does not discuss Brandom's inferentialism (Goldberg 2015, 74).

Before giving reasons for the thesis that the commitment account has explanatory power in the cases of buck-passing and blame, I will outline Brandom's views on assertion and testimony. In Brandom's account, the key vocabulary consists of the terms " commitmen," "entitlement," "deontic status," "deontic attitude," and "normative status." A belief is modeled on a commitment that is acknowledged by making an assertion. Commitment and entitlement, which correspond to obligation and permission, are two sorts of deontic statuses; entitlements come with authority, while commitments come with responsibility. What this means, among other things, is that an asserter is entitled to make inferences from her assertion and use her assertion as a reason, and she is committed to give reasons for her assertion if they are asked for. On Brandom's account, a deontic attitude is a person's attitude of taking or treating an asserter, whether that asserter is the person herself or another person, as committed or entitled. The asserter's normative status is understood in terms of the addressee's deontic attitude toward her, and that status may change as a consequence of her and the addressee's actions. On Brandom's view, assertions are fit to be reasons, they are "fodder for inferences" (Brandom 1994, 157 – 168). From the addressee's point of view, assertions are commitments whose reasons may be asked for, because they come with responsibilities; moreover, they can also be used as reasons for further inferences.

For a Brandomian inferentialist all assertions are testimonies, even if the authority and the burden of responsibility that they carry may vary across contexts. Assertional speech acts license others to undertake the same doxastic commitments as the testifier. On Brandom's view, the testimonial authority of an assertional act is balanced by a responsibility to exhibit one's entitlement to the commitment, if the recipient challenges it. Brandom distinguishes between three ways of exhibiting entitlement: one may offer an inferential justification, present the commitment as the result of exercising a reliable non-inferential perceptual ability, or refer to a testifier's assertion and thus defer the responsibility to her. The last alternative also allows buck-passing, if that is needed when the assertion is challenged. Deferrals may also be explicit; for example, the speaker may say that she, the speaker herself, is a competent perceiver. Brandom also states that we inherit authority from the testifier (Brandom 1994, 532). Testimony thus involves a kind of inherited entitlement.

Blame can be easily explained in terms of the commitment account, because the risk of blame comes with responsibility. The speaker is responsible for her assertions, she is therefore also to blame if it turns out that she does not manage to take care of her responsibility. Because the addressee who has inherited authority may defer the responsibility to the testifier, the model presented by Brandom also takes into account the cases of buck-passing. The commitment account is not essentialist as the constitutive rule account; therefore, it is not hit by Cappelen's most serious attack.

3. Lessons from Excursions into Frege's and Quine's Semantics

As Brandom and Peregrin both emphasize, Frege seems to speak in favor of inferentialism in his *Begriffsschrift* (1879) (Brandom 2000, 50; Peregrin 2014, 3 – 4). Frege writes there as follows:

> The contents of two judgments can differ in two ways: it may be the way that the consequences which can be derived from the first judgment combined with certain others can always be derived also from the second judgment combined with the same others; secondly, this may not be the case. The two propositions "At Plataea, the Greeks defeated the Persians" and "At Plataea, the Persians were defeated by the Greeks" differ in the first way. Even if one can perceive the slight difference in sense, the agreement still predominates. Now I call the part of the contents which is the same in both, the conceptual content. (BS, § 3).

In this passage Frege suggests that the logically relevant content of a sentence is determined by what can be inferred from the sentence. Frege's distinction between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* is normally taken to be a representationalist view. In the *Begriffschrift* Frege notes that in an identity statement the two symbols have the same *Inhalt*, but different *Bestimmungsweisen* (BS, § 8). In "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" (1892) he claims that in an identity statement the two names have the same *Bedeutung* and different *Sinne* or different *Bezeichnungsweisen* (KS, 143). In "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" Frege remarks that the sense of a proper name is a way in which the object to which this expression refers is presented, a way the object is given, or a way of "looking at" the object. As is well known, Frege gives examples of senses, like "the Evening Star" and "the Morning Star" as senses expressed by "Venus", and "the teacher of Alexander the Great" and "the pupil of Plato" as senses expressed by "Aristotle" (KS, p. 144). If I see Venus as the Morning Star and even judge that it is the Morning Star, my judgment implies several things, primarily that Venus is a star and that it is visible in the morning. If objects are given via their senses as Frege tells us in "Ausführungen über Sinn und Bedeutung" (1892 – 1895) (NS, 135), they are thereby given in a conceptual framework, and in that framework we are allowed to make inferences concerning the "location" of each object. Therefore, Frege's inferentialism and representationalism turn out to be connected.

Frege regards it as possible for an object to be given to us in a number of different ways. He observes that it is common in our natural language that one single proper name expresses many senses. For Frege, to each way in which an object is presented there corresponds a special sense of the sentence that contains the name of that object. The different thoughts that we get from the same sentence have the same truth-value. In his article "Der Gedanke" (1918) he notes that we must sometimes stipulate that for every proper name there is just one associated manner of presentation of the object denoted by the proper name (KS, 350). However, in his paper "Über den Begriff der Zahl" (1891/92) he states that different names for the same object are unavoidable, because one can be led to the object in a variety of ways (NS, 95). One sense or a number of senses provides us only with onesided knowledge (*einseitige Erkenntnis*) of an object. Frege argues that complete knowledge of the reference would require us to be able to say whether any given sense belongs to it but that we never attain to such knowledge (KS, 144).[6]

Frege does not discuss errors concerning the senses of objects, or attitudes, including prejudices, towards persons. We cannot tell whether he would have distinguished between seeing an object *as* something and judging that an object is such-and-such. However, it seems that for him, one's attaching a sense to an object, one's seeing an object *a* as *P* amounts to believing truly that *a* is *P*. If that view were true, then seeing somebody as something would mean that one would be willing to acknowledge the thought, that is, to judge, or even to assert, that the person is such-as-such. That, however, does not hold. It is possible that one has a prejudice toward a person, a non-propositional attitude, but one is not willing to make the corresponding judgment. However, inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony requires that attitudes towards testifiers are propositional attitudes.

Quine's behavioral theory of meaning is quite distant from what Frege was after. It heavily relies on what I would call our attitudes toward persons, even our beliefs about persons. Guesses and hypotheses play a more important role in Quine's theory of linguistic behavior than Quine explicitly admits. First of all, the linguist must recognize native assent and dissent. Quine writes that the linguist must simply set forth a hypothesis as to what is assent and what is dissent (Quine 1960, 29 – 30). The linguist must also try to guess what the questions of the native's language are like, whether they are formed out of declarative sentences by changing the intonation or by grammatical transformations. Hence, what the scientist interprets as assent and dissent is a mere guess, on which the very concept of stimulus meaning is based.

It makes sense to assume that, even if the native answers, truthfully or untruthfully, to the linguist's query, she may have no idea of why the stranger gives her utterances. Still, Quine seems to presuppose in his behavioral theory of meaning that the native has a propositional or a non-propositional attitude toward the linguist. Quine presupposes that the native sees the linguist as one who asks questions in order to find out the meanings of the expressions of the native's language. This implicit assumption of Quine's can be shown by the following example. Quine gives a separate consideration for situations of language learning and linguistic research. In language learning, the child who turns to her mother when hearing the word "Mama" is rewarded by the adult's approving of her response. However, according to Quine, the child's learning to look at an object named does not necessarily have to be operant behavior; the child can also be directed to look at the object (Quine 1960, 82). The adult points at the object and names it, and the child learns to look at the object and, at the same time, learns its name. Quine also writes that no two people can learn the language in the same way and, in a sense, no one finishes learning language while she lives *(ibid.*, 13). Let us suppose that the linguist has not made any guesses at how the questions of the native's language are formed. Further, let us suppose that the native does not see the linguist under any kind of description, that is, she does not see the linguist as a person asking questions. Since we, according to Quine, learn language all our lives and since the native does not see the linguist as a quering scientist, she might as well behave as if the linguist taught her the language. Furthermore, since the child can learn language so that the adult directs her to look at an object and names that object, we could perfectly well assume that the linguist teaches the native in the very same way. However, Quine does not propose anything of that kind.

Let us imagine a situation in which the linguist asks a native child her semantic questions. Could the native child learn the language from the linguist? We must assume that either belief or alief, to use Tamar Szabó Gendler's term, the one that the person is an adult or the one that she is an outsider, determines the child's attitude. Hence, in order to avoid the difficulties, Quine must implicitly presuppose that the native sees the linguist as a quering person, not as an authority coming from the outside of the tribe to tell the natives "the correct names of things." From what has been said above it follows that the linguist and the native have what could be called attitudes toward the person. On the one hand, the linguist sees the native either as an assenting or as a dissenting person. On the other, the native sees the linguist as an inquiring person, not as an adviser. That basic attitude can be construed either as propositional or non-propositional.

4. The Normative Attitude and the Attitude Toward the Speaker

If understanding an expression involves knowing its role in inferences, testimonial beliefs are not direct in the sense that we would adopt them as detached from other beliefs, and hence, that we would not consider them in terms of other beliefs we have. However, that is not yet to say that beliefs based on testimony have beliefs about the testifier's competence or epistemic and other virtues as their premises. The question will be raised whether the normative attitude that Brandom and Peregrin emphasize includes such beliefs. Peregrin point out that the normative attitude might be similar to Tamar Szabó Gendler's alief or Hubert Dreyfus' idea of absorbed copying (Peregrin 2014, 78). Normative attitudes must also be taken into account when we seek to find out how the inferentialist commitment account would evaluate inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony.

Brandom argues that to be one of us is to be the subject of normative attitudes. Being such a subject means being capable of acknowledging proprieties and improprieties of conduct, being able to treat a performance as correct or incorrect. On his view, such attitudes are implicit; this means that Brandom seeks to deintellectualize the idea of normativity. He notes that the normative attitude must be "construed as somehow implicit in the practice of the assessor, rather than explicit as the endorsement of a proposition" (Brandom 1994, 32 - 33). I argued above that "seeings as" need not be acknowledgments of any thoughts or endorsements of propositions and that Frege's thought about our attitudes toward objects as references can be interpreted either way. I also argued that Quine's semantics depends on the interlocutors taking attitudes toward persons; those persons are taken to be authorities or advisors, hence, competent testifiers, or as those whom the language is taught. Quine cannot avoid taking these evaluations as the basis of what he regards as linguistic hypotheses. As an attitude toward a speech act, an inferentialist attitude is deontic; it concerns the speaker's commitments and entitlements, or her obligations and permissions. If it were an attitude toward a person, it would be an evaluative attitude along the lines of virtue ethics. The question to be asked is whether it would be a propositional attitude, a belief about a person, or a seeing a person as such-and-such without endorsing any proposition that the person is such-and-such. If it need not be such an endorsement, then strictly speaking a Brandomian inferentialist is not an inferentialist in the epistemology of testimony. Brandom mentions, though, that tropes may be introduced that express authority. For example, one may say "I am a reliable reporter of red things under circumstances like these" (Brandom 1994, 532). Similarly, one might think that the addressee could express her judgment on the testifier's competence. That expression would then be is a further reason for the assertion originally made and an item in the inferential chain of the recipient.

As noted above, in the receiver-centered epistemology of testimony an anti-inferentialist simply accepts what the testifier says. However, this is a simplified interpretation of the anti-inferentialist's thesis. The rival inferentialist position is reductive or internalist as it claims that testimonial knowledge depends on the fact that the receiver possesses an independent justification for the testifier's competency and sincerity.[7] Coady, who is an anti-inferentialist, does not support any naïve view that a person should believe just any and every thing he is told. On the contrary, he also accepts the idea that the addressee considers the veracity of the witness, the probability of what she says, and other similar things. However, unlike an anti-inferentialist, an inferentialist has a sceptic's attitude; she doubts everything the other says. In the commitment account it is not the case that the skeptical attitude dominates; in that respect, a Brandomian inferentialist is not an inferentialist in the epistemology of testimony. Stephen Napier summarizes an anti-inferentialist position with the following description of the case of perception: " … if one believes that there is a tomato on the table, we clearly do not require that the believer justifiably believe that her faculties are functioning properly, the environment is conducive to veridical perception or that no one has deceptively replaced the real tomato on the table with the fake one" (Napier 2008, 80). Such things are taken for granted. An anti-inferentialist like Coady admits, though, that we are interested in such things as the credit of witness, confirmation received from other witnesses, and the consistency of what the witness tells us. However, unlike an inferentialist, Coady is not constructing a theory of the speaker and thus intellectualizing the process of the reception of testimony.

Miranda Fricker (2003, 2007) seeks to avoid intellectualism and therefore criticizes inferentialists' view on testimonial knowledge. However, she also emphasizes that "the mere absence of explicit signals for doubt is not enough to justify a general habit of uncritically accepting what other people tell one" (Fricker 2003, 155). She seeks to find a way to understand what testimonial knowledge ought to be like, if it is non-inferential and yet critical. That project amounts to an effort to describe what the addressee's rationality should be if it is not inferential or argumentative rationality. Her position is an interesting point of comparison to normative inferentialism.

Fricker suggests that some mode of rational sensitivity is needed that yields spontaneous, non-inferential judgments. On her view, a virtuous person need not work out that an act was cowardly; she just sees that this is the case. She speaks in favor of the skill of critical openness to the word of others, but admits that giving up the demand for inferences also opens the door for prejudices, stereotypes, and the influence of power (Fricker 2003, 160 and 165). She admits that epistemic trust has an affective aspect that is influenced by how the hearer sees the testifier. What she is looking for is a virtuous recipient, an expert addressee, along the lines suggested by Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus, who has an intuitive grasp of the situation and who thus need not use such faculties as inference in order to see whether the testifier is reliable.

Fricker pays attention to the hearer's virtues and responsibility. Brandom and Peregrin, for their part, are interested in what normative statuses the hearers give to the asserters when they evaluate the asserters' actions. In inferentialism it is the commitment to give reasons and the entitlement to ask for reasons that matters. It is required from the two interlocutors that they take their respective roles. Brandom states that testimony provides reasons when it is reliable (Brandom 2000, 100).

The commitment account of assertion, hence, also normative inferentialism, which focuses on the speaker's commitments and entitlements, is concerned about the moral status of the speaker's acts from a deontological point of view, how the speaker manages with the responsibility and the authority that have come with her assertion. As for the recipient's status, a normative inferentialist would not favor the skeptical attitude in the epistemology of testimony; nor would she slip to naïve reliance. Miranda Fricker, who seeks a balance between inferentialism and anti-inferentialism in the epistemology of testimony, is interested in what happens at the receiver's end. Fricker focuses on the receiver's spontaneous judgments and "seeings as" concerning the speaker's reliability and other virtues; those "seeings as" may be prejudiced, if the hearer is not virtuous. She thinks that an evaluative attitude, which is non-propositional, not a link in any inferential chain, is needed in order to avoid the intellectualism of inferentialism and the gullibility of anti-inferentialism. However, to avoid prejudices and to argue against them requires that non-propositional attitudes are made propositional; at this point Miranda Fricker favors inferentialism over anti-inferentialism.

The normative attitude emphasized in the inferentialist philosophy of language and the evaluative attitude towards the testifier suggested by Miranda Fricker are related. The main difference lies in what kind of moral theory they emphasize. However, if assertions are testimonies, one who supports the commitment account also has to consider the reliability and other virtues of the testifier; hence, she also has to adopt some of the virtue ethicist's viewpoint. The adoption of a testimonial belief involves the recipient's seeing the testifier as a certain kind of person; still, the "seeing as", the evaluative attitude toward the testifier, need not have the role of a premise in an inferential chain. It may work as a precondition on which all inferring relies. There are such basic attitudes as trust that keep communities alive. They are transcendental conditions for any inferences. Occasionally, however, there are power and other relations that are parts of the very inferences as hidden premises and that should be made explicit. This conclusion is related to how Peregrin understands the normative attitude; they may be propositional attitudes, but they are not generally propositional attitudes.

Notes

[1] See Peregrin's characterization of Brandomian normative inferentialism in Peregrin (2014), 6 – 14.

[2] See E. Fricker (1987, 1994, 2006) and Coady (1992). Also see Kusch (2002), 20 – 28, and Napier (2008), 77 - 105.

[3] See, e.g., BS, § 2, and "Der Gedanke" (1918), KS, 346.

[4] For theories of assertion, see Brown and Cappelen (2011). In this section I have used extracts from my article "Testimonies of Faith and Contemporary Theories of Assertion," to appear in H. Appelqvist and D.-J. Eklund (eds.), *Origins of Religion*, Luther-Agricola Society, Helsinki.

[5] See Lackey (2008), 103 – 140, and Goldberg (2011) and (2015), 72 – 92.

[6] For Frege's distinction between senses and references and its connection with the so called context principle, see, e.g., Haaparanta (1985), (2001), and (2006).

[7] For detailed comparisons of the two views, see Napier (2008).

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